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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AVIATION MANAGEMENT

Safety Alert

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Subject: External Cargo Net/Sling Load Equipment

Area of Concern: Helicopter Operations – Cargo Operations

Distribution: All Fire and Aviation Personnel

Discussion: During a recent training exercise it was noticed that sling kits that were issued from a local cache had incompatible parts.

The two rings of most cargo nets will not fit on the new smaller J-hooks of the lead lines because the spring loaded keeper gate is too long to allow the two rings to be attached to the hook (see illustration). If the rings are forced onto the hook, the keeper gate can be bent or possibly broken creating an unsafe condition by allowing one or both rings to accidentally slide off the hook during load operations.



There are no manufacturer's markings to identify the problem keeper gates and the only distinguishing features are that the keeper gate is riveted to the hook and is approximately 3/8 of an inch longer than the traditional keeper gate. San Dimas Technology and Development Center is aware of the problem and is currently working on a corrective solution. In the interim, inventory and check assigned sling gear and set aside any hooks that have this particular gate.

For additional information contact Brad Gibbs, BLM (208) 387-5182 or Glenn Johnston, USFS (208) 387-5634.

/s/ Robert Galloway
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